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with
Judy Woodruff

21 november

Dear Irv,

Here is a copy of the release.
Tom says all is okay.
Hope you had great trip.

Best,

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THE EARTHQUAKE IS COMING
PBS airdate: Tuesday, February 3, 9pm 60 minutes

Scientists are certain that a catastrophic earthquake will devastate the state of California within 30 to 50 years.

Some experts say it may be the second worst tragedy in national history. The Civil War is first, and then, by far, this will be the second, according to a study by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

What are the startling implications of a killer quake on California and the world?

"The Earthquake is Coming," a FRONTLINE with Judy Woodruff documentary airing Tuesday, February 3 at 9 pm (check local listings), reveals what happens when the earthquake strikes and examines the awesome effects throughout the nation's economy, industries and defense and national security.

The Federal Emergency Agency predicts $40 billion damage in the San Francisco area, up to 11,000 dead and 44,000 hospitalized and in the Los Angeles area, $20 billion damage is predicted, 14,000 dead and 55,000 hospitalized.

Neighborhoods will crumble. Fires, rubble and blockades will create giant traffic jams. A disruption in electronic communications will affect world economy, and possible military destruction will threaten national security. Pollution and health hazards will overburden hospitals which aren't ready and never really can be.

"How do you prepare for enough injured to fill every emergency hospital bed in the free world?" Jagerson says. "It's like how do you prepare for a nuclear war?"

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the people of California should be preparing for," says Allan Lindh, a geophysicist for the U.S. Geological Survey.

Richard Eisner runs an earthquake preparedness group in the San Francisco area. "Unless we find out beforehand what the problems are, solve the problems and strengthen the buildings--we are dooming to death and injury a significant population of the Bay Area," he says.

David Harris, Vice President of the Los Angeles-based First Interstate Bank, prepared a bank report on earthquakes. He warns that in this major financial center, a computer knocked out for three days will affect local economy; if it's down a week, it could devastate world economy.

"California businesses selling to people outside the state would have no way of depositing and processing the incoming flow of cash," Harris says. "So we have a short-term interruption in the normal flow across the U.S.. The further we get behind, the further the ripple effect."

The military picture will also be bleak. California held $42 billion in military contracts in fiscal 1985, 23 percent of all money spent on military goods and services. The state also holds 50 percent of the US missile and space vehicle business.

"If we have a major catastrophic earthquake within the next year or two," says Air Force Col. Norman Neill, who did an earthquake study for the Pentagon, "we'd have major damage to many of our (defense) contractor facilities and major program delays."

Seventy-five percent of the national microchip industry is in Silicon Valley. "We have so many buried tanks, old gas tanks, natural gas lines, reservoirs for waste in the various Silicon Valley companies," says Jim Berkland, county geologist in Santa Clara County. "They're like a lot of land mines waiting for a seismic footprint."

Hospitals along the fault will also suffer. Dr. Michael Callaham, Chief of Emergency Medicine at University of California Medical Center in San Francisco, says Bay Area hospitals are unprepared

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for the disaster. "To provide the usual standard and quality of care the American citizen expects, we are absolutely not ready and we never will be," he says.

Perhaps the most dangerous spot is San Bernardino, an hour east of Los Angeles. Ironically, San Bernardino is one of the fastest-growing counties in the United States, according to U.S. Census statistics.

"Most of us who live outside California know the threat the earthquake poses," says David Fanning, executive producer of FRONTLINE. "Our program asks whether we are prepared when that quake finally hits. Since there were 15,000 earthquakes reported in California last year, I believe that question is timely and important."

FRONTLINE is produced by a consortium of public television stations: KCTS Seattle, WGBH Boston, WNET New York, WPBT Miami and WTVS Detroit.

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FRONTLINE is closed captioned for the hearing impaired.

The anchor for FRONTLINE is Judy Woodruff.

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